

License your pet, help your community

By Councilmember Rose Herrera

With over a million people living in San Jose, there are thousands of pets that also call San Jose home. The City of San Jose's Animal Care & Services Division is responsible for balancing the needs of the greater community with the needs of the animals that live amongst us. The role of Animal Services became even more visible to me in the last few months.

Recently, there was a dog attack here in Evergreen. The Animal Care and Services Division (ACS) was able to identify that this was an isolated incident because of their knowledge of animal behavior and the dog was previously licensed. The Field Operations team researched the case and picked up one of the dogs the day after the incident. Thanks to our pet licensing program, the dog was in the system and the City was able to quickly gather information about the animal.

I am pleased to share with you that I will be commending the neighbor who came to the aid of the victim. I will present a commendation to Juan Valencia at the March 8th City Council meeting for his bravery and heroism. He could have ignored what was happening but instead risked his own safety to help rescue the victim. I am grateful for his quick thinking and willingness to help.

Captain Leslie Tisdale, Sergeant Jay Terrado, Officers Michelle Metcalf, Kevin Johnson, Jennifer Garner, and Marie Annandale of ACS worked the case. My thanks to them for their determination and excellence in the field.

This case is one example of how the pet licensing system can work. The pet licensing program is important to all residents, even non-pet owners. If every pet in the City is licensed, we would have the resources to meet the demands of a city that is over a 170 square miles.

The services provided by ACS include picking up stray and dead animals, helping animals in distress, following up on citizen complaints, providing lost pet services, administrative work like maintaining records, host low-cost spay and neuter clinics, animal adoption, and many more services.

Maintaining accurate data may seem like a low priority but it was a critical piece in researching the case. Due to current and accurate record keeping, the Animal Control Officers were able to quickly track the dog's history in San Jose.

The fee to license your pet is minimal. For a dog that is spayed or neutered, the \$30 fee covers your pet for three years. What do you get for in exchange? If your dog is lost and

found during those three years, ACS will return it to you. This means saving money on impound fees. Plus, it reduces stress on your pet. Your fee also gets you and your community all the animal services provided by ACS.

The Animal Care & Services Division truly cares about animals. Your license fee helps pay for animal cruelty investigations and humane education. The license fee keeps the doors open on low-cost spay and neuter clinics which reduces animal overpopulation and unnecessary euthanasia.

The pet license is a great deal and I hope you license your pet right away. If every pet owner in San Jose licensed his or her animal, we would be able to provide more rapid responses to calls throughout the community.

For more information on licensing your pet, you can visit: www.sanjoseca.gov and go to the Animal Services link.

Save the date to help with litter pick-up at the Great American Litter Pick up on Saturday, March 19. Visit www.sanjoseca.gov/district8 for more information.